



Business Consulting Services

# Indicators for Hard-to-Measure Results

USAID Performance Management Workshop  
2004

Integrated Managing for Results (IMR) Project  
Contract AEP-C-00-99-00034-00

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**What kinds of results are hard to measure?**

## Indicators: quantitative, qualitative or both?

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### QUALITATIVE

- Expert opinion on comprehensiveness of a law

### BOTH

- ◆ Country score on “Corruption Perceptions Index”

### QUANTITATIVE

- Dollar value of plantains exported

## Quantitative or Qualitative Indicators?

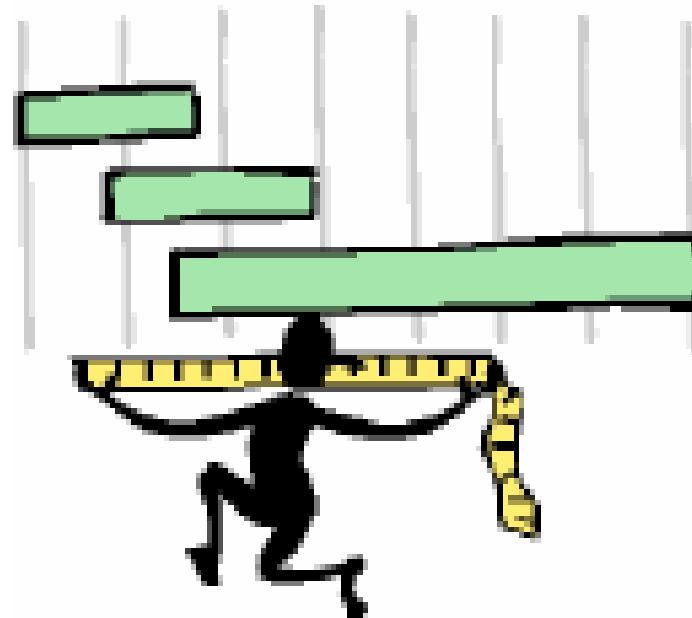
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- Use the most appropriate type for the result being measured
  - (ADS 203.3.4.1 section a)
  
- The PMP should represent your overall strategy for getting the right mix of the two to effectively track progress.

## Types of Qualitative Indicators

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- Milestone Scales
- Rating Scales
- Indexes



## Milestone Scale

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- Tracks incremental progress in a series of steps
- Clearly defines each critical step



## Examples of Milestone scales

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- Example:
  - Key Law is Changed
  - What are some milestones?
  
- Example
  - “Progress in Enacting Legal Reform”

## Rating Scale

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*A measurement device that captures a range of subjective responses on a **single issue** or **dimension of an issue**.*

Ratings can be done by:

- **You or your team:** Rating of financial management capacity of USAID supported NGOs

*On a scale of 0-5, where 0 = no capacity and 5 = strong, sustainable capacity*

- Financial management capacity of NGO A      1      2      3      4      5

- Financial management capacity of NGO B      1      2      3      4      5

- **Beneficiaries:** Rating by women who have received services from a health clinic

*On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is strongly agree and 5 is strongly disagree, please answer the following questions:*

-The staff were professional during your visit      1      2      3      4      5



## Types of Rating Systems

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- **Expert Panels:** Rating by an expert panel on progress in fiscal reform

Rate each element of progress in the fiscal reform agenda on a scale of –5 to +5, where –5 represents serious/significant backward movement; 0 represents no movement and +5 represents serious/significant forward movement.

-Fiscal deficit	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
-Taxes	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
-Social sector spending	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5

## Index

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*Combination of two or more ratings collapsed into a single measure.*

Indicator: score of target CSO on the “CSO Capacity Index”.

1. Organizational Capacity	1	2	3	4	5
2. Financial Management	1	2	3	4	5
3. Networking	1	2	3	4	5
4. Strategic Planning/Vision	1	2	3	4	5
5. Impact (in selected CSO area)	1	2	3	4	5

Actual Total = 16 / 25 or 64%

- 1 is low and 5 is outstanding
- Minimum 0, Maximum 25

## Index, continued

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- Assists in assessing overall progress
- Simplifies comparisons
- Allows for different weighting of factors
- Must be transparent to be useful (how does scoring work?)
- Can be used as learning tool

*Key Issue: Consider the usefulness of combining a series of measures to form an index versus maintaining each measure separately*

Example:

- Index of CSO Financial Capacity

vs.

- \$ value of funds raised by targeted CSOs from non- USAID sources

## Keep in mind

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- Different people may rate differently. Consistency is the key. Using the same team of raters helps.
- Think about how many values the scale should have
- Weights should be assigned with care

**Key challenge:**

limit subjectivity to the maximum extent possible  
by documenting the definition of  
terms, concepts, and methods

## Pitfalls in measuring qualitative results

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- Definition of indicator is confusing. Team members have different opinions about what is being measured.
- Data collection process is unclear and changes each year
- Criteria for assigning scores was never written down

## Resources

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- Toolkit:
  - p. 24-26
  - Helpful Hint #2, “Indicators for Hard to Measure Results”
  
- TIPS 14, “Monitoring the Policy Reform Process”
  - [http://www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACA949.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACA949.pdf)
  
- TIPS 15, “Measuring Institutional Capacity” (on your CD)
  - [http://www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACG612.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACG612.pdf)
  - Annex available at: [http://www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACG624.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACG624.pdf)

## Final thought

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***“Not everything that matters  
can be measured,  
and not everything  
that can be measured matters.”***